

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress
2nd Session

Vote No. 223

July 23, 1996, 2:28 pm
Page S-8502 Temp. Record

WELFARE REFORM RECONCILIATION/No Time Limits for Non-Cash Aid

SUBJECT: Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996 . . . S. 1956. Ford amendment No. 4940.

ACTION: AMENDMENT REJECTED, 48-51

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. 1956, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996, will enact major welfare reforms. The Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program will be replaced with a new Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant to the States. The TANF block grant will be capped through 2001. Time limits will be placed on individuals receiving TANF benefits. Overall, the growth in non-Medicaid welfare spending will be slowed to 4.3 percent annually. The bill originally included major Medicaid reforms, but most of those provisions were stricken when the bill was reported. Without those Medicaid reforms, welfare spending will still be reduced by \$61.4 billion over 6 years.

The Ford amendment would amend the prohibition on giving TANF benefits to a welfare recipient after the 5-year lifetime limit was reached to make it a prohibition only on giving cash benefits. Non-cash assistance, including vouchers, would be permitted without any time limit (for related debate, see vote No. 205).

Those favoring the amendment contended:

Everyone wants to get tough on adults on welfare. They need to work. However, no one wants to get tough on those adults' children. Children in America should not suffer if their parents refuse to work. Therefore, we have offered the Ford amendment, which would make it possible to provide non-cash assistance to children after their parents have used up their 5-year eligibility to receive cash TANF welfare benefits. The Senate rejected a 60-vote point of order against a Breaux amendment earlier that was along the same lines as this amendment. No point of order lies against this amendment, however. The National Governors' Association supports having the option of giving noncash assistance after the 5-year limit for an individual expires and so does the Catholic Bishops' Conference. We urge our colleagues to do so as well.

(See other side)

YEAS (48)			NAYS (51)			NOT VOTING (1)	
Republicans (2 or 4%)	Democrats (46 or 98%)		Republicans (50 or 96%)	Democrats (1 or 2%)		Republicans (1)	Democrats (0)
McConnell	Akaka	Johnston	Abraham	Hatfield	Ford	Kassebaum- ⁴	
Specter	Baucus	Kennedy	Ashcroft	Helms			
	Biden	Kerrey	Bennett	Hutchison			
	Bingaman	Kerry	Bond	Inhofe			
	Boxer	Kohl	Brown	Jeffords			
	Bradley	Lautenberg	Burns	Kempthorne			
	Breaux	Leahy	Campbell	Kyl			
	Bryan	Levin	Chafee	Lott			
	Bumpers	Lieberman	Coats	Lugar			
	Byrd	Mikulski	Cochran	Mack			
	Conrad	Moseley-Braun	Cohen	McCain			
	Daschle	Moynihan	Coverdell	Murkowski			
	Dodd	Murray	Craig	Nickles			
	Dorgan	Nunn	D'Amato	Pressler			
	Exon	Pell	DeWine	Roth			
	Feingold	Pryor	Domenici	Santorum			
	Feinstein	Reid	Faircloth	Shelby			
	Glenn	Robb	Frahm	Simpson			
	Graham	Rockefeller	Frist	Smith			
	Harkin	Sarbanes	Gorton	Snowe			
	Heflin	Simon	Gramm	Stevens			
	Hollings	Wellstone	Grams	Thomas			
	Inouye	Wyden	Grassley	Thompson			
			Gregg	Thurmond			
			Hatch	Warner			

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

- 1—Official Business
- 2—Necessarily Absent
- 3—Illness
- 4—Other

SYMBOLS:

- AY—Announced Yea
- AN—Announced Nay
- PY—Paired Yea
- PN—Paired Nay

Those opposing the amendment contended:

We strongly oppose the Ford amendment because it would seriously undermine the real 5-year time limit on welfare assistance. One of the most important features of welfare reform is that recipients must understand that welfare is temporary assistance, not a permanent career. Our colleagues can say that voucher benefits would only go to children, but that type of separation is not possible. If benefits went for housing, for example, the whole family would obviously benefit. Further, we remind our colleagues that cash assistance is only one form of welfare that is available. After the 5-year limit runs out, a welfare family will still qualify for food stamps, housing assistance, the Women, Infants, and Children Program, and dozens of other Federal, State, and local means-tested welfare programs. Their basic needs will still be met--all they will not get is the cash. That seems to be too much to ask for some of our colleagues. They want to turn that cash into vouchers. They want an eternal welfare benefit; all that would be different is that after 5 years the recipients would be restricted in what they were allowed to buy. We do not think we would be doing welfare recipients any favors by allowing them to stay in dependency. We are determined to make welfare a temporary condition, not a way of life, and thus strongly urge the rejection of the Ford amendment.